

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 056153

STADIS/////////
FOR WILLIAM H. GLEYSTEN, JR.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, ETRD, EAID, PINT, PGOV, KS

SUBJECT: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT - KOREA

TO: EA - MR. HOLBROOKE
FROM: EA/K - ROBERT G. RICH, JR.

1. DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE FOR NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (LOU).

WE COVERED THE ASIA WORKSHOP, CHAIRED BY DON RANARD,
AND PORTIONS OF THE PLENARY SESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE.
THE WORKSHOP CAME UP WITH A LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS
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CALLING FOR INCREASED USG EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES
IN POLICY MAKING AND LOUDER OFFICIAL STATEMENTS DIRECTED
AGAINST RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ASIAN COUNTRIES. THE
PANEL ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER CHANGING
DIPLOMATS OVERSEAS TO SIGNIFY DISSATISFACTION ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND ASKED THAT WE BE MORE CANDID AND OPEN IN
SHARING AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS
SITUATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.

THERE WAS AN IMMENSE DIVERSITY OF INTEREST EXPRESSED

THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE, WITH CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM DIRECTED AT THE DEPARTMENT FOR LACK OF BALANCE IN THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ASIA WORKSHOP WAS CHAIRED IN A NON-PARTISAN MANNER, BUT THE TWO PANELISTS CONFINED THEIR PRESENTATIONS TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH KOREA AND AN IMPASSIONED PLEA FOR AID TO VIET-NAM. THIS DREW FROM THE AUDIENCE THE REMARK THAT IT WAS "DISGRACEFUL" TO HAVE SUCH A NARROW FOCUS COMBINED WITH SPECIAL PLEADING FOR A MASSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR. THE LACK OF ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN COMMUNIST ASIAN STATES ALSO DREW CRITICISM IN THE WORKSHOP.

2. MARCH 1 PASSES INTO THE RECORD BOOKS (LOU).

ONE OF THE YEAR'S TRADITIONAL PROTEST DAYS HAS PASSED WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT, AND GIVEN THE TONE OF RECENT RELEASES OF DOCUMENTS CRITICAL OF THE ROKG, THE GOVERNMENT HAS REACTED WITH A RELATIVE RESTRAINT REPRESENTING A DECIDED IMPROVEMENT OVER THE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE MYONGDONG DECLARATION TWO YEARS AGO. AT LATEST COUNT, ALL THE DISSIDENTS PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST OVER THE HOLIDAY HAVE BEEN RELEASED AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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THREE TO FIVE PERSONS PICKED UP FOR QUESTIONING LAST WEEK ARE AT LIBERTY. A RALLY OF SEVERAL HUNDRED WAS HELD WITHOUT INCIDENT, ALTHOUGH THE MORE PROMINENT PERSONALITIES WERE PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING. SPRING IS COMING. THE UNIVERSITIES ARE ABOUT TO REOPEN, AND THIS IS AN ELECTION YEAR. FURTHER EFFORTS BY THE DISSIDENTS TO BRING ON A FULL-SCALE CONFRONTATION ARE INEVITABLE.

3. CHANGING KOREAN ATTITUDES (CONF).

VINCENT BRANDT, A SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST, LONG TIME STUDENT OF KOREAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SOMETIME LECTURER AT HARVARD SPOKE TO DEPARTMENT OFFICERS MARCH 2 ON CHANGING KOREAN ATTITUDES. EXPANDING ON A PAPER RECENTLY DONE FOR INR/DD/XR, BRANDT MADE A NUMBER OF INTERESTING POINTS: 1) THE GREAT MAJORITY OF KOREANS HE FEELS FAVOR THE U.S. AND STRONG TIES WITH IT, BUT DISILLUSION AND RESENTMENT TOWARD "U.S. IMPERIALISM" IS GROWING AMONG SOME ELITE GROUPS; 2) STUDENT ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVISTS EVOKE SOME SYMPATHY B;T ARE

NO LONGER TAKEN SERIOUSLY AS THE CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION AS IN EARLIER DAYS; 3) MOST KOREANS DISAPPROVE OF CHRISTIAN ANTI-GOVERNMENT DISSIDENCE; 4) KOREANS GENERALLY, AND THE BUREAUCRACY IN PARTICULAR, DISPLAY

GROWING CONFIDENCE AND SENSE OF PURPOSE; 5) FARMERS FEEL MORE INVOLVED IN NATIONAL ISSUES, THEIR ATTITUDES ARE MATURING, AND THEIR GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE CURRENT REGIME SEEMS SOLID; 6) ACADEMIC AND MIDDLE CLASS ATTITUDES ARE MOST DIFFICULT TO GENERALIZE ABOUT. BRANDT SAID HE WAS REVISING AN EARLIER HELD VIEW THAT THE URBAN POOR WERE BEING LEFT OUT OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. HE NOW BELIEVES THIS GROUP IS ALSO BENEFITING FROM GROWTH, HAS A STAKE IN THE CURRENT
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REGIME, AND DOES NOT COMPRISE THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR PARK CHUNG HEE THAT BRANDT PERCEIVED IN 1972.

4. NORTH AMERICAN COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOREA (LOU)

A FIVE-PERSON DELEGATION FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOREA, LEAD BY CHAIRPERSON PEGGY BILLINGS, CALLED ON THE DESK MARCH 1 FOR A TWO HOUR MEETING IN WHICH I SPOKE AT LENGTH ON THE FUTURE POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN THE ROK. WE ALSO DISCUSSED THE COUNCIL'S CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE ROKG REPRISALS AGAINST KOREAN POLITICAL ACTIVISTS FOR RECENT RELEASES OF STATEMENTS CRITICAL OF THE ROKG. I BELIEVE BOTH THE DESK AND THE COUNCIL BENEFITED FROM THE EXCHANGE, AND WE FOUND SOME GENERAL AREAS OF PHILOSOPHICAL AGREEMENT, WHILE CLARIFYING SOME DIFFERENCES. WE HAVE OFFERED TO MAINTAIN A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE COALITION AND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE RELATED TO THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT PARTICULAR INDIVIDUALS IN THE ROK.

5. ISA PANEL ON DIVIDED NATIONS (LOU).

WE PARTICIPATED IN A PANEL DISCUSSION ON THREE DIVIDED NATIONS, KOREA, CHINA, AND GERMANY, HELD DURING THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 24-25. IT EVOKED NO AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION AND PRODUCED NO NEW THOUGHTS ON KOREAN UNIFICATION. PROFESSOR EUGENE KIM OF WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY SUGGESTED A NUMBER OF TRADES THAT SEOUL AND PYONGYANG MIGHT THEORETICALLY MAKE BUT NEITHER HE NOR THE OTHER PANELISTS HELD OUT MUCH IF ANY PROSPECT FOR A SERIOUS SOUTH/NORTH DIALOGUE. IN CONTRAST TO MANY
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OTHER PANEL SESSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WERE LIVELY AND FULL, THE DIVIDED NATIONS SESSION ATTRACTED AN AUDIENCE OF ONLY TEN, INCLUDING SEVEN KOREANS, WHICH ASKED

NO QUESTIONS FOLLOWING THE PANELISTS' PRESENTATIONS.

6. SEMINAR ATTENDANCE (LOU).

FRANZ MISCH PARTICIPATED IN A FEBRUARY 25 SEMINAR ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND U.S. POLICY ARRANGED BY GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR MODEL UNITED NATIONS. THE AUDIENCE OF ABOUT 30 WAS MADE UP MAINLY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS FROM EAST AND MIDWEST STATES, REPRESENTING A GOOD CROSS-SECTION OF AMERICAN INTERESTS. OTHER PANELISTS INCLUDED AN OFFICER FROM THE SOVIET DESK AND AN EMPLOYEE OF THE OAS INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. MAJOR POINTS COVERED WERE THE NEED TO INTEGRATE HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS INTO THE COMPLEX FABRIC OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS AND THE POTENTIAL COSTS TO THE U.S. FROM ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE HUMAN RIGHTS WITH "LEVERS" SUCH AS PL-480 AND SUPPLIER CREDITS. OF INTEREST WAS THE TENDENCY OF ADVOCATES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND OTHER AREAS TO USE KOREA AS A WHIPPING BOY. ESSENTIALLY, THE ARGUMENT WENT: WHY DO YOU PICK ON LATIN AMERICA AND LET OFF WELL-KNOWN VIOLATORS SUCH AS KOREA?

7. IMPORT LIBERALIZATION GETS FURTHER BOOST (LOU).

MOVING WITH COMMENDABLE SPEED, ON FEBRUARY 16 THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT IMPORT LIBERALIZATION COMMITTEE FORMED EARLIER THIS YEAR ISSUED BASIC TRADE LIBERALIZATION GUIDELINES. THE KEY QUESTION NOW IS HOW MANY ITEMS WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE RESTRICTED LIST, AND WHETHER THOSE CHOSEN WILL GENERATE A SIGNIFICANT CONFIDENTIAL

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INCREASE IN IMPORTS. WE CAN EXPECT SOME TARIFF INCREASES AS KOREA BEGINS THE SHIFT AWAY FROM NON-TARIFF BARRIERS. THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF ROOM FOR PROTECTIONISTS TO MANEUVER AS THE GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS UNDERLYING THE GUIDELINES ARE BASED HEAVILY ON HOW IMPORTS WILL AFFECT DOMESTIC INDUSTRIES. HOWEVER, SOME REAL MOMENTUM SEEMS TO HAVE DEVELOPED TOWARD FACING THE LIBERALIZATION ISSUE WITHIN FORMALIZED GOVERNMENTAL MECHANISMS. THE GUIDELINES REPRESENT OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO MODIFY EXTREME BILATERAL TRADE IMBALANCES VIS-A-VIS MAJOR PARTNERS, ADJUST TO A CHANGING BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION, PROMOTE DOMESTIC PRICE STABILITY, AND GENERALLY WORK WITHIN THE GATT/MTN FRAMEWORK.

8. CIVILETTI CONFIRMATION HEARINGS (UNCL).

ACTING DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL BENJAMIN CIVILETTI'S CONFIRMATION HEARINGS HAVE DRAGGED THROUGH A WEEK OF QUESTIONING ON DOMESTIC ISSUES IN WHICH MR. CIVILETTI HAS BEEN INVOLVED, BUT NOTHING SIGNIFICANT REGARDING HIS KOREAN ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN RAISED. THE HEARINGS ARE CONTINUING AND IT IS STILL QUITE POSSIBLE THE TONGSUN PARK AGREEMENTS AND INTERROGATION IN SEOUL MAY BE RAISED.

9. IFI LOANS AND HUMAN RIGHTS (CONF).

THE INTERAGENCY GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE MET FEBRUARY 27 TO REVIEW A NUMBER OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING FOR KOREA: RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE II (IBRD-\$95 MILLION),
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RAILWAYS VI (IBRD-\$120 MILLION), AND KOREAN DEVELOPMENT BANK V (ADB-\$50 MILLION). EA ARGUED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN KOREA HAS IMPROVED RECENTLY, AND THAT AFFIRMATIVE VOTES ON THESE LOANS ARE WARRANTED AS A POSITIVE SIGNAL TO THE ROKG. THE GROUP DID NOT REACH A CONSENSUS ON THESE LOANS AND FURTHER DELIBERATIONS WILL BE REQUIRED BEFORE THE IBRD REVIEW MARCH 14.

10. PL-480 (CONF).

DESPITE THE EXPENDITURE OF A GOOD DEAL OF TIME AND EFFORT, WE ARE NO CLOSER TO A RESOLUTION OF THE IMPASSE OVER INCLUSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS-LINKED LANGUAGE IN THE PL-480 AGREEMENT. ESSENTIALLY THERE ARE THREE, PERHAPS MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, OBJECTIVES TO BE MET: (A) THE KOREAN DESIRE TO AVOID THE STIGMA OF BEING BRANDED AS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR; (B) THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 112 OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT; (C) THE U.S. DESIRE TO PROTECT OUR VERY IMPORTANT POSITION AS A SUPPLIER OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES TO KOREA. WITH REGARD TO THE FIRST, IT SEEMS INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE KOREANS WILL ACCEPT NO VARIATION FROM THE END USE LANGUAGE WHICH HAS BEEN USED IN PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS. WITH REGARD TO THE SECOND, THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 112 THAT ALL PROCEEDS MUST GO TO MEET BASIC HUMAN NEEDS, AND THAT COMPLIANCE REPORTS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF DELIVERY OF THE COMMODITY, MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPLY WITH THE LAW WITHOUT AMENDING THE STANDARD KOREAN AGREEMENT. FINALLY, WE ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE CONVINCED THAT WITHOUT A PL-480 PROGRAM THE ROKG WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WHAT IS APPARENTLY A STANDING CANADIAN OFFER TO PROVIDE GRAIN ON VERY ATTRACTIVE, LONG REPAYMENT TERMS. CHRISTOPHER

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